

This Old House

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We asked interior designer Denise Enright to tell us about the highly efficient, "tri-purpose" entry/laundry/mudroom in the **TDH 2017 Idea House**, the **Beach House at East Matunuck, Rhode Island**. Here are some of the thoughtful design decisions that resulted in this multifaceted and inviting space.

COME ON IN!

This space has many roles, encompassing a laundry room, a mudroom, and a pet-washing station. The goal for this high-traffic area was to make it as welcoming as it is functional. Clean, neutral walls allow for fun with fabric patterns. There's a drop zone and cubbies to organize belongings. Durable black slate flooring can withstand heavy traffic. Generous windows allow plenty of natural light and offer a sweeping view of the front yard. And there's direct access to the guest room, so guests can enter without traipsing through the main floor of the house.

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on the cover



COVER PHOTOGRAPHY
CARL TUCKER/AF



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Letter FROM TOH

I can see clearly now...

For the more than 18 years I lived in my former house, October 4 was almost two things: the return of cool, crisp weather, and it was time to wash the windows. This was no easy task.

It all goes back to me as I read "Make That Glass Sparkle" Deborah Fields' excellent piece about best window-washing practices on page 36. I love the look of sunlight streaming through clean windows. But my 1942 downtown Manhattan townhouse had front and back windows on four stories. There was no water access on the front, which meant the man mostly washed the windows. Early on, I hired a company that came with a telescoping ladder and did them all. It cost an arm and a leg, and I didn't do it again.

The back windows were another story. From my first-floor deep lookout, I could reach the ground- and first-floor windows. From the third-floor deck, I could tackle floors three and four.

I once tried to wash the second-floor window by hand from an extra-wide ladder (One was enough.) The old cleaning utility product called Window Outdoor Glass & Paint Cleaner, which screwed onto the garden hose to both wash and treat the windows.

The problem, as noted, was that five-foot-deep backyard. Window one, no problem. Window two, piece of cake. But no matter how hard I tried or where I positioned myself, there was no way to wash the remaining windows without being precariously in the face of the blowback. Eventually I developed a method for this task that included a pair of goggles and avoid-splashing-on-water-with-a-hood. Every single time, by the time I finished, I looked like Paddington Bear. Only water.

After I came inside and towed off 13 tackle the interiors—all the windows plus both sides of the four sets of French doors with 10 or 15 divided light each. It took a whole day and my arms hurt for two.

The house I live in now has two stories and no French doors. The owners replaced the old windows with ones that tilt and are easy to clean on both sides. I'll see them.

SUSAN RYLAND,
EDITOR IN CHIEF
www.thisoldhouse.com



My window washing must look like me from Paddington Bear. So the job I did before a year, he would really puggled too.



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Reader mail OCT 2017



TALES OF HOUSES LOVED and *houses lost* flooded in following our July/August issue. Many letters also included stories about how projects, renovations, and repairs brought together the people who lived in these houses—who turned them into homes.

Old-house dreams

I loved reading Susan Wyland's "The One That Got Away" [Letter from TOLC July/August 2017]. I felt a homesick pang in Ohio for a newer one in Raleigh, NC, and I've had dreams about it ever since. Two years later, we've bought a small home that's a real first experience that "old-house-emptiness" I felt is rebuffed again. But, like Susan, I will never forget my first love.

—JENNIFER PATTON BALDWIN NC

Thank you for the editor's letter to the July/August issue. My "one that got away" was my childhood home. Your letter is a great look and the new owners haven't taken care of it. Sometimes you have to look back to move forward—and the house gives me ideas for something big! BT's term/term.

—DEE LATHAM WADE MAE

The littlest apprentice

My 6-year-old son, Emmett, wants to be a "little old house guy" so he wants to be an apprentice. I'm glad to see that he's interested in the trades. Together they built a shelf. Thanks for the great work you do! My little guy wants to be a carpenter one day.

—CLAIRE DUNN VINT MAIL

How to reach us:
E-mail the editors at TOLC_letters@theolchouse.com

OR WRITE TO:
The Old House magazine
280 Harbor Drive
Stamford, CT 06902

• Include your full name, address, and phone number. Published letters are edited for clarity and length.



Timely gift idea

—ANNE M. EDGEMORE WADE MAE

My mother-in-law loves the hand-graben cutting board in a recent issue [Build It May 2017]. So I just had to make it a treat for Mother's Day. I used an salvaged 2x10 from my 99-year-old house. Thanks so much for the idea and the easy-to-follow instructions!



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home solutions

Edited by Mary Kate Hogen

INSIDE | LEAF RELIEF | RENO TIPS | SMARTER OUTLETS | STICK-ON STYLE | MORE



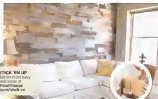
Carve out an avian rest stop

This whimsical feeder is a sure way to attract winged visitors while also brightening your view from inside. To make one, carve out a crookneck and tie tuffe-shaping yellow ribbons (read: look) still intact. Cut eyes and nose opening to belly, along with holes for berry eyes, twig feet, and a twist hanger. Insert entry realtion for sharp beak, protecting your other hand with a work glove. Scrape out the soft flesh, as desired, the shell will firm up (it won't dry as hard—or last as long—as a brownie). The non-toxic glue is often belly berries or water for bees for eyes, and glue to form when a house with wings. Fill with birdseed, thread the twine through to hang in a shady spot, and your feeder is ready to fly.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

Stick-on style

If you've got a space that needs a quick makeover, there's a growing array of innovative wall- and window treatments that offer major visual impact in minimal time—no commitment needed.



STICK 'EM UP
Get an instant easy makeover at WoodHouse.com/velcro.

CREATE PRIVACY
With patterns that can move etched glass, this window film adheres with water and lets in light while disguising the view—from indoors or out. From \$24 per square foot. stickprivacy.com.



4. ADD A Rustic Touch

Want to try out the barn-wood look without sawing and hammering? These faux-claimed barn-wood "planks" stick to the wall—or, more precisely, to repositionable Velcro-like strips—for easy installation and relocation. From \$9.99 per square foot. elwood.com.



5. MAKE AN INSTANT BACKSPLASH

Get the look of mosaics without having to grout. A gel compound adds dimension to peel-and-stick sheets that interlock for a convincing tile-like look. From \$7.99 per 9.85-square-inch sheet. thesmarttile.com/smart_tiles_us-us-4.

Yes, you should test for radon—again

Remember radon? This invisible, odorless, poisonous gas may no longer be the headline, but it hasn't gone away. Any product of naturally occurring minerals in soil, rocks, and groundwater, it can be found at unsafe levels in nearly 1 of every 15 homes, according to EPA. "It's a radioactive gas, and it causes lung cancer," says Bill Long, director of the agency's Center on Radon and Air Toxics. And while most people don't fret unless they're buying or selling a house, "we recommend testing every couple of years, and after a major renovation." Long says. Leaky ducts, kitchen vent hoods, fireplaces—anything that decreases the air pressure inside a house relative to the outdoors—have the potential to pull radon from the soil around the foundation and cause an unsafe buildup of the gas.

Geologists have identified radon-rich zones, but only **basement inspections** can have a major problem: new or old, well sealed or poorly, with or without a basement. When radon levels exceed 4 picocuries per liter, a certified professional can install a system to suck the gas safely out of the house. Some test kits take quick snapshots, while others offer an average over time. Smart-home radon detectors can work continuously and monitor humidity and temperature as well as radon. EPA suggests installing these devices in the **lowest lived-in level of a home**. But skip kitchen and baths, due to their exhaust fans. —**CRISTIAN SALVENDY**



The Wave (\$199)
at things.com/wave for radon warning.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATION: JEFFREY M. HARRIS



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Double the pleasure

Snagging square footage from an adjacent porch makes for a spa-like retreat that's flooded with light and nearly twice its original size **BY MIKA MAGLIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK LIDMAN**



BEING ABLE TO LET the outside in is perhaps the most desirable aspect of living in a warm, sunny climate. So, eager as Melissa Loy and Mike Maglin were to relaunch the newly custom-built in their 1938 Spanish Revival house in Whaley Heights, CA, they weren't keen on giving up the adjacent screened-in porch. "We needed a larger bathroom—two people simply couldn't squeeze in it at once—but we didn't want to sacrifice having a private outdoor area," Mike says.

Kaiser architect Jeff Trayer, who devised the perfect compromise: Awns about two-thirds of the porch to enlarge the bath and build a balcony in the remaining space.

Opening up a structural wall means adding new joists and a header beam, the archway created in the opening echoes a feature found throughout the house. A custom vanity with two sinks was installed as an arched nook just inside the entrance to the room, while the length of the former porch was given to the tub, allowing the bather a view out the balcony's French door to the backyard. Classic white subway tile, oval-hex tile floors, and bronze fixtures add to the luxurious feel. Mike and Melissa feel like they got the best of both worlds. "The bath is so functional and roomy, we're never on top of each other," Melissa says. "And all that natural light and fresh air are heavenly!"



BEFORE The original green tile and built-in vanity had their charm, but the cramped bath was easy to get light for less.

AFTER With almost double the square footage, the room is now bright and airy, with a luxurious spa tub, a spacious shower, and a vaulted ceiling. Top: Danny Frensch; and Mirrors, Newport Drive Lights, Schott House Design.



The 6-foot-long custom vanity, easily in room's enough for two, has built-in storage for bulky essentials, with open shelving behind for towels. Hinged mirrors cover recessed medicine cabinets that hold toiletries. The arched nook repeats the shape of the opening, but contrasts the streamlined lines.

before
The screened porch offered plenty of room to expand the 70-square-foot bath.



after

An arched opening connects the two halves of the new 121-square-foot bath, while French doors access a new 8-by-3½-foot balcony.

1) Rebuilt the wall between the existing bath and the porch, incorporating an arched opening to connect the two parts of the expanded space.



2) Installed a 6-foot tub, about the length of the former porch, opposite a pocket door to the closet.

3) Put the toilet between the shower and the lower wall.

4) Enlarged the shower wall, enclosed it in frameless glass to preserve an open, airy feel.

• before + after | bath



French doors now open into balcony, creating an open sight line as you enter the room. "With the daylight, we now get tons of natural light," says Melissa Loy, shown left, with her husband, Mike Maglin, right. "Plenty of light for putting ourselves together, but not enough to remind us we're not as young as we used to be!"

The new window-lined breakfast nook opens up Sonja's old views. It's the main dining space for the family (from left, Kevin Connor, Riley, now 12; Quinn, now 6; Justin, 10-year-old; and Duke, now 4). Windows: Kiefer Table Restoration Hardware

Along existing walls was opened up for the sink island which has seating at the family room side and new soffits. Above over head and pots hang as a child's glass the metal support. From left: Kiefer Table Restoration Hardware



A coffee station is conveniently set up next to the breakfast nook. New wood cabinet windows have a matching that which lines the house is ceiling metal window. All the lower cabinets are drawers.

The wet bar provides a storage area for cocktails on the polished island. The built-in desk offers a space for recipe browsing or homework. Countertop: Honeyblack granite



before

A U-shaped cooking zone was isolated at the back of the house and was separated from the eating area.

after

After swapping spots with the family room, the kitchen got a more open, functional layout.



1) Added a central island that holds the cleanup zone with a sink and dishwasher—and seating on the family room side for snacks.

2) Turned a 12 by 5-foot alcove into a nook that's the family's main dining area, even when the grandparents are over. Says Julie:

3) Connected the kitchen to the formal dining room via a built-in pantry (the old home office) for staging by meals.

The sleek lines of the stainless steel range and hood is enhanced by the white quartz countertops and backsplash. Soap drawers provide storage for pots and pans. The random-width planks on their rift-jawn oak floors are perfectly aligned. Design: Jodi Ronghi; Hood: West A Hood



Childproof doors on the range wall feature a sleeker design in glass, stainless steel. It's a subtle nod to the original island. The rift-jawn oak is a new addition to the greenhouses through Sonja's Top-Grade.

Reinventing a style misfit

A 1970s split-level gets a curb-appeal boost from an inviting entry porch, new siding, and updated windows and trimwork

BY KATE WOOD • ILLUSTRATION BY DRANPAGE INC.



STYLES CHANGE, "but luck: Tudor split-level just should never have been a style," says Dana Gidley, referring to the 1971 house she shares with her husband and son in Allentown, PA. So she asked local architect David R. Drake and Christine DeOlivieri of Carol WEA Design Group to reinvent its appearance. First, the duo would brighten the recessed entry by adding a porch with open railings in the gable end, along with a French door, side lights, and a transom. The existing gable end gets a steeper pitch and trimwork to echo the porch's for a look that's updated yet classic. Large double-hung above a wide transom opens up and arches the facade. Gray clapboard-style siding, with the stepped-back lower level's brick painted a darker shade, sets the new charcoal gray roof. "I like it!" says Dana. "The new porch really adds balance." ■

WANT TO SEE YOUR HOME HERE? To be considered, submit photos to redid@redidmag.com



finishing touches

Quality details refresh the house and contribute to the cleaner, more coherent design.



siding

Reinvented fiber cement claddings have a traditional cedar look, pale gray like the picket. HardHatPicks. CedarMill-Like Siding in Pearl Gray. \$55 per panel. www.hardhatpicks.com



pendant

A lantern-style porch light is a cast-iron finish. Recalls the new entry. Estimated 1796. Ingh. Durable Hanging Light. \$200. lampson.com



windows

New, larger double-hung with gables make the low-slung house feel taller. Sherrill's Old Double Hang Window. From \$450. www.sherrill.com



pavers

Stark, white pavers to make the entry porch look like a patio. Interlock Multicolor. Various Patterns. Size: \$4.32 per square foot. www.dorco.com



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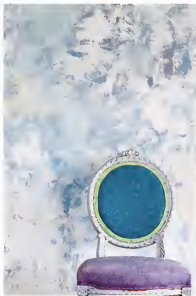
Rough up a wall

Slather on colors drawn from nature, then smooth out the edges—no brush, no roller, just special effects BY DEBORAH BALDWIN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER DRAKE

IF THE GOAL of most amateur paint jobs is a even, uninterrupted backdrop devoid of bumps and brushstrokes, the idea here is something else again. Like an Abstract Expressionist painting, this wall has movement and visual texture. "The idea was inspired by old chateau walls with layers of paint and plaster, and by time-worn walls and Venetian plaster," says Anne Sloan, the British decorative painter and entrepreneur who details this project in her most recent book, *Anne Sloan Paints Everything* (KCCO books).

Her No. 1 trick involves a humble tool: Call it cardboard mason canvas. "Cardboard is soft and doesn't make scratchy marks, yet it's still firm to hold," Sloan says. It does absorb paint, however, which means you need to stop in a fresh pail every 5 to 10 minutes—one way to dispense that pile of boxes from Amazon.

All told, it's a satisfying, clever endeavor, whether the end result covers a small bathroom or a dramatic accent wall. The step-by-step, opposite, shows how.



The palette used to achieve the look at right: Anne Sloan Chalk Paint in warm-colored Old Dutch (base coat) and Chalkwhite (final coat) with accents made from Duck Egg Blue, Lotus Blue, Old White, and Taupe Grey.

STEP-BY-STEP



1) **Pour roughly equal amounts** of the two blues into a square piece of mason canvas since the base coat is completely dry.



2) **Work the two blues together** using strokes of 1/2 in. cardboard while scraping them to blend the paint.



3) **Move to the wall** and use the cardboard to create the layered, layered effect of color by softly scraping and varying pressure as you move along, angling the cardboard using one or two hands. Let the one-amp base color show through in spots.



4) **Add a few accents** of a color you want to use with bits of the two blues that remain on the mat, and use the cardboard to apply it here and there.



5) **Create a blue-gray** by mixing white with smaller amounts of the two blues and a bit of the taupe; apply it on Step 3. Do a final sweep with white, allowing glimpses of the colors underneath to show. If you're using white chalk paint, it's some time; blue greys are there.



6) **Smooth the layers.** Use sandpaper to take care of any hard edges, then add sheen with a buffing pad. Seal the wall with a layer of wax, if you wish. Fiddle the finished wall with a shaggy fur pillow placed in front of it, and here's the rest of the decor clean and simple. ■

STYLING: JANE HARRISON/STYLING; PROP STYLING: JANE HARRISON/STYLING